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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Move deeply in our hearts today, O Lord, so that we will conform to Your ways. Help us to understand Your purposes and submit to Your providence.

Empower our lawmakers to do Your will. Make them hungry and thirsty for Your spirit and power. Show them Your plan. Teach them Your paths. Instruct them on how to make our world a better place so that the sacrifices of those who die for our freedoms will not be in vain.

Open doors of greater opportunity for service as our Senators seek to be instruments for Your glory. May pleasing You become the primary aim of their labors. We pray in Your righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore [Mr. BYRD].

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, morning business this morning will not be the full hour. When the Republican leader and I complete our brief statements to the body, the time will be divided 50-50, with the first half of the time being controlled by the Democrats and the second half of the time being controlled by the Republicans.

At 10:30, we will resume consideration of H.R. 2, the minimum wage bill. The time until 11:30 will be equally divided or controlled between the two leaders or their designees regarding the Gregg amendment. The cloture vote will occur at 11:30.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that the majority time prior to the cloture vote with respect to the Gregg amendment be equally divided between Senators CONRAD and KENNEDY, and I also indicate that following the cloture vote, if cloture is not invoked on the Gregg amendment, there will be an immediate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 2, the minimum wage bill. Members have until 10:30 this morning to file second-degree amendments.

Progress was made yesterday. The Sessions amendments were disposed of—voted upon, modified, or with-

drawn. That was good progress. There are seven amendments pending presently. As I recall, there are three by Senator ENSIGN, most dealing with Social Security; Senator BUNNING has one dealing with Social Security; Senator KYL has one dealing with depreciation; Senator SUNUNU has one dealing with women's business centers. I think those are the only amendments now pending. So we ask that Senators continue to work through this bill. We are going to agree to set aside the pending amendments so Senators can offer other amendments so we can move through this bill as quickly as possible.

I hope Senators realize there must come an end to this process. We will see what happens after the two cloture votes as to what we will do for the rest of the week.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

FINISHING H.R. 2

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, we encourage all Members who may have amendments on this side to come down. As the majority leader indicated, we will make progress on the bill this morning, and we look forward to finishing this bill some time in the future.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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